

Patent No. 5,739,831); and COWMAN et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,685). No agreement was reached regarding these references.

Applicants would also like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, and for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449. Applicants also acknowledge the Examiner's objections to the drawings. However, Applicants note that the Examiner has not indicated that the drawings have otherwise been approved by the Official Draftsperson on a Form PTO-948. The Examiner is thus requested to indicate that Applicants' drawings are acceptable in the next Official Action.

Upon entry of the above amendment, claim 6 will have been amended, claims 20 and 21 will have been canceled, and a proposed drawing correction has been submitted herewith by separate paper to overcome the Examiner's objections to the drawings. Accordingly, claims 1-19 are currently pending and Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application. Such action is respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate and proper.

The Examiner has objected to the title of the invention as not being descriptive. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the title "Pressure Sensitive Sensor" is clearly

descriptive of the invention that is claimed, especially since the claims recite a pressure sensitive sensor and a method of making a pressure sensitive sensor that detects pressure caused by pressing into contact with each other first and second electrode members. Accordingly, it is believed that the title is "brief but technically accurate and descriptive" as required by MPEP § 606, and Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the title.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings as failing to include the legend "prior art" in Figure 8. In response thereto, Applicants have amended Figure 8 as suggested by the Examiner. Thus, in view of the above noted amendments and remarks, it is believed that this objection to the drawings has been overcome.

Further, the Examiner has objected to the drawings "because it is unclear as to what the difference is between "insulative member 15" and "yarn strands 15a" in Figure 5. In response thereto, Applicants have amended Figure 5 to delete reference numeral 15. Thus, in view of the above noted amendments and remarks, it is believed that this objection to the drawings has been overcome.

Further, the Examiner has objected to the drawings as failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the Examiner states that the "automobile body" and the "door" must be shown or the feature canceled from the claims.

In response, claims 20 and 21 have been canceled. Accordingly, it is believed that this objection to the drawings is now moot.

The Examiner has rejected claims 6-13, 20, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicants respectfully submit that in view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, the basis for such rejection is no longer appropriate and Applicants thus respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 6-13, 20, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner has rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as the phrase “so that said net braid member” is unclear since the net braid member is not recited in the claim. In response, Applicants have amended claim 6 to depend from claim 2, which recites “a net braid member”. Accordingly, it is believed that the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, has been overcome.

The Examiner has rejected claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as the claims are “not proper dependent from claim 1”. Applicants have canceled claims 20 and 21. Thus, it is believed that the rejection of claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is now moot.

Accordingly, in view of the above noted amendments and remarks, claims 1-19 are believed to fully comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and Applicants respectfully

request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 6, 9, 14, 15, 17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by TERUO (U.S. Patent No. 5,311,779). The Examiner takes the position that TERUO discloses a pressure sensitive sensor 1 including a first electrode member 4, a second electrode member 6, and an insulative member 3 between the first and second electrode member. However, Applicants note that TERUO fails to show each and every element recited in the claims. In particular, claim 1 sets forth a pressure sensitive sensor including, inter alia, “an insulative member provided between said first electrode member and said second electrode member, said insulative member including an insulating material that allows electrical contact between said first electrode member and said second electrode member through a gap portion in its mesh when pressed, and insulates said first electrode member and said second electrode member when not pressed”. Claim 17 recites a method of making a pressure sensitive sensor including, inter alia, “providing an insulative member between said first electrode member and said second electrode member, said insulative member including an insulating material that allows electrical contact between said first electrode member and said second electrode member when pressed, and insulates said first electrode member and said second electrode when not pressed”. The TERUO patent discloses a pressure sensitive sensor including a conductive elastomeric sheet 2, an insulation

shell 3, a printed circuit substrate 5, electrodes 6, and a contact 4. In the TERUO device, the insulation shell 3 is positioned on top of the conductive elastomeric 2, not between the electrodes 6, as shown in figure 1. Further, the TERUO device operates by detecting changes in the electrical resistance of the conductive elastomeric sheet 2 caused by deformation of the conductive elastomeric sheet 2, not by electrical conduction caused by pressing into contact with each other ordinarily spaced apart electrodes, as recited in independent claims 1 and 17. See particularly column 5, lines 53-64 of the TERUO patent. Since the reference fails to show each and every element of the claimed device and every step of the claimed method, the rejection of claims 1, 6, 9, 14, 15, 17, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over TERUO is improper and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-5, 7, 8, 10-13, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over TERUO in view of EBATO (U.S. Patent No. 6,166,338). The Examiner takes the position that TERUO discloses the claimed invention except for an insulative net braid member, a central electrode restorable to its shape, and a wire wound on the outer periphery of the central electrode. The Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to modify the TERUO device and method to include a net braid member and an electroconductive metal wire wound on the periphery of the restorable central electrode as taught by EBATO.

However, Applicants note that TERUO and EBATO fail to teach or suggest the subject matter claimed, including, inter alia, “an insulative member provided between said first electrode member and said second electrode member, said insulative member including an insulating material that allows electrical contact between said first electrode member and said second electrode member through a gap portion in its mesh when pressed, and insulates said first electrode member and said second electrode member when not pressed” as set forth in independent claim 1 and “providing an insulative member between said first electrode member and said second electrode member, said insulative member including an insulating material that allows electrical contact between said first electrode member and said second electrode member when pressed, and insulates said first electrode member and said second electrode when not pressed” as set forth in independent claim 17, as described above.

Further, the EBATO patent discloses a switch device including a tubular net member comprising both conductive material 112 and insulative material 113. The EBATO patent fails to disclose an insulative net braid member comprising only insulative material. Therefore, the EBATO patent fails to cure the deficiencies of the TERUO device and method, and even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of TERUO and EBATO have been properly combined, Applicants’ claimed pressure sensitive sensor would not have resulted from the combined teachings thereof. Further, there is nothing in the cited prior art that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to make the modification suggested by the

Examiner in the rejection of claims 2-5, 7, 8, 10-13, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over TERUO in view of EBATO. Thus, the only reason to combine the teachings of TERUO and EBATO results from a review of Applicants' disclosure and the application of impermissible hindsight. Accordingly, the rejection of 2-5, 7, 8, 10-13, 16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over TERUO in view of EBATO is improper for all the above reasons and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all the rejections, and an early indication of the allowance of claims 1-19.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the present amendment is proper and that none of the references of record, considered alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicants' invention as recited in claims 1-19. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Accordingly, consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present amendment and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

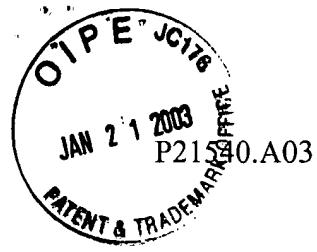
Applicants note that this amendment to the claims is to be considered merely a clarifying amendment that is cosmetic in nature, and is not intended to narrow the scope of the claims. Accordingly, this amendment should not be considered a decision to narrow the claims in any way.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
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MARKED UP COPY OF CLAIM AMENDMENTS

6. (Amended) The pressure sensitive sensor according to claim 2 [1],

wherein said first electrode member includes an elastic electroconductive tube comprising an elastic electroconductive material, said second electrode member includes a central electrode member having a long narrow bendable shape provided inside said elastic electroconductive tube, and said insulative member is provided between said central electrode member and said elastic electroconductive tube so that said net braid member covers an outer peripheral surface of said central electrode member.